

River City School of Irish Dance

Parent & Student Handbook



2020

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Welcome to River City School of Irish Dance

Hello everyone and welcome to The River City School of Irish Dance! We are thrilled to begin another productive and fun-filled dancing season with all our students and their families. Here at River City we focus on teamwork, determination, and technical skill in an encouraging and positive environment, hoping to instill in our students the foundations for a positive competitive spirit and self-confidence both on stage and off. River City is one of the longest running Irish Dance Schools in Saskatoon, officially opening its doors in 1996. Membership is open to any dancer age 3 and older. The School promotes awareness, understanding, and love of Irish Dance and culture at every class. The instructors believe it is of the utmost importance to teach Irish Dance as traditionally as possible whilst remaining modern and competitive. Our goal at River City is to teach your child to Irish dance to the best of his/her ability while having a fun and memorable experience.

Our dancers participate in many Feiseanna (Irish Dance competitions) throughout Western Canada, nationally and internationally. Lessons are held three to four times per week, however, beginners are given the option to dance once or twice per week. The school also participates in dance performances at a variety of venues (i.e., malls, senior's homes, schools) and high-profile public performances including FolkFest, Saskatoon Blades, Saskatchewan Rush, and the Nutrien Fireworks Festival. River City holds two shows a year for families and friends to attend. There is a Christmas Concert in the fall and a Ceili (Irish word for party!) in the spring. These events are great opportunities see how the dancers improve throughout the year while meeting everyone in the River City community! It is truly marvelous watching our young people develop and display not only their dance skills but also their self-confidence through public performance and solo and team competitions.

This handbook has been created to inform both new and returning students and parents of River City School of Irish Dance of the policies that all members are expected to become familiar with each year. If you have additional questions that have not been addressed, please contact the instructors.

Communication between students, instructors, and parents is essential for our school to run smoothly this year, so please check your email frequently and do not hesitate to contact us at any time with any questions you may have. We also post frequent updates about upcoming events on our social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) as well as our website. We thank you for choosing River City as your dance school. We cannot wait to begin another fantastic year with all of you!

Sincerely,

Katie Bleakney, TCRG & Nicole Nienaber, TCRG

CONTACT INFORMATION

Studio Location

B4 - 3501 8th Street East
Saskatoon, SK S7H 0W5

Mailing Address

B4 - 3501 8th Street East
Saskatoon, SK S7H 0W5

Instructors

Head Instructor – Katie Bleakney, TCRG (306) 250-5111
katiebleakney@gmail.com

Head Instructor – Nicole Nienaber, TCRG (306) 291-7992
nicolemnienaber@hotmail.com

Adult Instructor – Angella Mossop (306) 717-2557
Angellamossop@hotmail.com

Main Email: **rcsidteachers@gmail.com**

RCIDPA Executive

President – Steve Piche
spiche@outlook.com

Vice-President – Skye Lennox
lennox25@sasktel.net

Treasurer – Leanne McGettigan
lmmcgettigan@yahoo.ca

Past President – Lenny Carriere
len.carriere@shaw.ca

Costumes – Nicole Stevenson
nm.stevenson@hotmail.com

Secretary – Cara Ong
cg_ong@hotmail.com

Volunteer Coordinator – Kari Weiman
weimankari@gmail.ca

Grants/Sponsors – Lynne Sandmeyer
lynne.sandmeyer@usask.ca

Events – Dawn Doherty-Affleck
dawndoherty@sasktel.net

Member at Large – Melissa Koenig
Melissafry9@hotmail.com

Member at Large – Shelda Stroh
shanlanstroh@gmail.com

Member at Large – Jackie Peacock
scottandjackie2003@yahoo.ca

Communication Policy:

The main form of communication for RCSID is through email. All emails are generated through the *Studio Director* website so please ensure that you are registered through the site and have chosen to opt-in to emails. A newsletter outlining upcoming events, fundraising opportunities and any other updates will be sent through email, bi-weekly. Instructors can be contacted through email and text in regards to attendance at class and performances. If texting the instructors, please be considerate and ensure that it is during reasonable business hours. Upcoming events and Feiseanna will also be posted on our website www.rivercityirishdance.com.

If parents have questions or concerns, they should talk to the instructors directly by email, telephone or making arrangements to meet outside of class time.

While it is our responsibility to ensure we provide accurate, up to date information to you it is your responsibility to seek assistance with any questions that you have and access and read the provided information.

For your Physio needs contact:
Donald Physiotherapy
Call: **306-933-3372**
Address: **80-3211 Preston Ave.,
Saskatoon SK**

For your Costuming needs contact:
The Kilt Lady – **Dawn McNally**
Call/Text: **306-260-1286**
Address: **1615 Forest Drive,
Saskatoon SK**

At the River City School of Irish Dance, we strive to ensure that every dancer will dance, create and perform in an environment that is respectful, and inspiring.

CODE OF CONDUCT - Dancers

FOR DANCE STUDENTS:

I will:

- Arrive on time to each class to avoid disrupting my teachers and other students, and begin to warm up athletically **10 – 15 minutes** before the start time of my class;
- Wear appropriate clothing and shoes to each class in accordance with the uniform requirements, (see below for specific uniform requirements) including wearing my hair in the appropriate style and removing all jewelry before each class;
- Be polite, courteous and respectful to my instructor(s);
- Treat all others as I like to be treated, being polite, courteous and respectful to other students and other people in the dance environment, regardless of ability, and strive to create a positive environment at all times;
- Be honest in my attitude and preparation to group work, by working equally hard for myself and my peers;
- Be frank and honest with instructor(s) concerning illness, injury, and my ability to participate in each class;
- Control my temper when things do not go the way I hoped;
- Respect the Dance Studio, performance environments, and competition venues, putting all garbage away and keeping the waiting areas neat and clean for the safety of myself and others;
- Respect and care for all Costumes as outlined by the costume guidelines.

I will not:

- Bully, gossip about, or isolate other students;
- Chew gum in class or eat food in classrooms or on any performance space;
- Use my mobile phone in class, in the foyer during my allocated class time, or in any change room environment;
- Leave the Dance Studio premises without a parent/guardian or parental permission;

I understand:

- The River City School of Irish Dance Corporation reserves the right to ask any Student to leave the School for inappropriate behaviour as outlined in the student handbook.

At the River City School of Irish Dance, we strive to ensure that every dancer will dance, create and perform in an environment that is respectful, and inspiring.

CODE OF CONDUCT - Parents

FOR PARENTS & OTHERS:

I will:

- Encourage my child to dance so long as he/she is interested in dancing;
- Focus on my child's performance rather than the overall outcome of the competition, or performance;
- Teach my child that an honest effort is as important as a victory, so that the results of each competition, or performance are accepted without undue disappointment;
- Teach my child to respect their peers and their Teachers, and lead by example;
- Help my child to set realistic goals based on his/her individual ability and experience;
- Encourage my child to follow the rules of the dance studio and any competition or performance they enter into;
- Applaud good performances by all of the performers, not only my own child;
- Remember that my child learns best by example, and that I need to practice what I preach;
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from all dance activities;
- Respect and follow advice and direction provided by TCRGs;
- Remember that my child and their friends are dancing for *their* enjoyment, not my own;

I will not:

- Force my child to attend classes if they lose interest in dancing;
- Ridicule or yell at my child, or any other child;
- Raise an issue with or question a teacher, a performance or an official's judgment in public, instead raising any issue or disagreement directly with the instructors, as as is outlined in the student handbook.

I understand:

- The River City School of Irish Dance Corporation reserves the right to ask any Parent or Other to leave the School for inappropriate behaviour as outlined in the parent handbook.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

River City School of Irish Dance Corporation places the highest emphasis on Health and Safety in conducting all daily operations.

This policy applies to all employees and students of the River City School of Irish Dance, whether volunteer or paid, and to all visitors.

River City School of Irish Dance Corporation is committed to ensuring, so far as reasonably practicable, that all employees and contractors are adequately informed, trained, and are able to work in an environment that is free of hazards that may cause personal injury.

This can only be achieved through constant promotion of safe working practices, safety awareness and a commitment to safety on the part of all employees and others associated with the River City School of Irish Dance.

In working to fulfil this commitment, River City School of Irish Dance Corporation shall;

- Maintain so far as reasonably practicable a safe environment at all studios and performance sites;
- Consult with our employees on all matters that may affect their personal safety;
- Ensure appropriate procedures exist for the reporting and review of all safety incidents that were hazardous or had the potential to be hazardous to the safety of our employees or others working in our area of operation.

The Directors of the Corporation have the responsibility and authority to ensure that the River City School of Irish Dance health and safety objectives are achieved. They will identify and support measures to eliminate unsafe acts, procedures, conditions, equipment, and hazards of all kinds.

Instructors and Assistants are responsible for the prevention of accidents and illness arising from work methods and the working environment. Their performance as a Class Leader includes their ability to identify, reduce, and prevent accidents and potential hazards.

Students and Parents while attending the River City School of Irish Dance must assume responsibility for their own safety and for that of their peers by following general reasonable instruction and by taking corrective action to halt or prevent unsafe acts and conditions within their control.

PREVENTION OF BULLYING POLICY STATEMENT

River City School of Irish Dance places the highest emphasis on Health and Safety in conducting all daily operations. This policy applies to all employees, students, and parents of the River City School of Irish Dance, whether volunteer or paid, and to all visitors.

The River City School of Irish Dance expects that all employees and other people associated with River City School of Irish Dance shall treat each other with respect and dignity, in an effort to provide a working environment that is cohesive and comfortable for all. Specifically, the River City School of Irish Dance will not tolerate any form of Bullying.

Bullying behaviour can include but is not limited to:

- Verbal abuse or shouting;
- Physical Abuse;
- Excluding or isolating a person;
- Psychological harassment;
- Humiliating a person through sarcasm, criticism or insults (including bullying through on-line systems);
- Ignoring or belittling a person's contribution or opinion.

The River City School of Irish Dance encourages the early reporting of any allegations of bullying.

Where any persons feel that they are the victim of bullying, they should discuss the matter directly with the person/people concerned and request an end to the behaviour. Should this approach fail or be inappropriate, the victim can raise the matter with the TCRGs.

Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who victimises or retaliates against a person who has made a complaint.

The TCRGs have the responsibility and authority to ensure that River City School of Irish Dance health and safety objectives are achieved. They will identify and support measures to eliminate bullying of any kind within the River City School of Irish Dance.

Students and Parents of the River City School of Irish Dance are responsible for their own behaviour and may face disciplinary action if they engage in bullying behaviour of any form.

Discipline Policy: The goal of the TCRGs is to make the dance class a fun, positive experience that is supportive of individual and group setting. Our expectation is that every dancer will treat others the way they would like to be treated, but in a situation where a dancer's behaviour or conduct is not appropriate, discipline will be enforced that is appropriate to the age group of the dancer involved. Younger dancers may be put in a *time out*, older students may be given a warning and then asked to leave the studio for the remainder of the class if the behaviour persists. Parents will be informed any time that a student is disciplined for poor conduct. Disciplinary action is applicable to the usage of profanity, bullying, verbal or physical altercations, or where continued disregard and disrespect towards an instructor, classmate, parent, or visitor is evident.

Should any dancer commit one of these offences during class time or any dance-related activity the following measures will be taken:

1st Offence – Parents notified and verbal apology to classmate, instructor, parent, or visitor will be required;

2nd Offence – Parents notified and 2-week suspension from class and dance activities;

3rd Offence – Parents notified and the potential that the dancer will be dismissed from the school.

CORPORATIONS BREAKDOWN

River City School of Irish Dance Corporation (RCSID)

River City School of Irish Dance Corporation was created in 2018 by Katie Bleakney and Nicole Nienaber. All fees for classes, competitions, and camps will be directed to the instructors through their corporation. They run their business through a website called *The Studio Director*. This is where you will register your dancer, set up monthly payments, and receive invoice for things such as feis registrations.

River City Irish Dance Parents Association (RCIDPA)

River City Irish Dance Parents Association is a non-profit organization operated by a volunteer parent board of directors that serves a membership of dance families. The mandate of the RCIDPA is to assist in the development of dancers, promote the awareness and appreciation of Irish Dance in Saskatoon, to foster good will and sportsmanship among our members and dancers, to provide costumes for our dancers and to provide resources to the RCSID. The RCIDPA will carry out their mandate by assisting RCSID to organize social events, coordinating school fundraising and managing the costume inventory. Revenues for the RCIDPA will be generated through membership fees, fundraising, grants, and sponsorships. This revenue will be used toward the cost of dancer workshops, for example, and travel expenses for the teachers to attend feiseanna.

Membership in the RCIDPA is mandatory upon registration with the RCSID. Each Family is entitled to one membership which grants the right to vote at meetings, the right to be elected, and the right to attend and participate in all general meetings. Membership fees payable to the RCIDPA shall be set prior to each fiscal year and are payable at the time of registration. Membership fees are non-refundable and any family who is registered with River City School of Irish Dance will be a member of the River City Irish Dance Parents Association by paying the annual fee of \$50/family.

RCIDPA Bylaws

The RCIDPA is governed by a set of approved bylaws. Members are encouraged to review these bylaws which are available on the RCSID website.

Meeting of Members

An annual general meeting (AGM) of members shall be held in the fall for the River City Irish Dance Parents Association each year at a time and place to be fixed by the Board of Directors. In addition, the Board of Directors of the RCIDPA will meet periodically throughout the year to discuss fundraising opportunities and plan events. These meetings are open for all members of the RCIDPA to attend at any time and the dates of these meetings will be published in the bi-weekly newsletter.

Monies Paid to River City School of Irish Dance Corporation (by Credit Card through Studio Director)	Monies Paid to RCIDPA (by Cheque)
Monthly Fees	Membership Fee
Feis Fees	Costume Rental
Camp Fees	Costume Damage Deposit
Cleaning Charges	Costume Requirements
Clothing Orders	
Personal Fundraising	

CLASS STRUCTURE AND RULES

At River City School of Irish Dance the Instructors set the Class Times and Fees to accommodate the needs of all varying levels of students enrolled in the school. It is understood that the instructors will put students in the level and class that, in their professional opinion, best suits each individual dancer.

Tiny Tots

This class is open to children age 3 and up and no former dance training is required. Tiny Tots is the only class that parents can stay for the duration. It is a thirty minute class and it is intended for young children who are excited about Irish Dance but are not quite ready for beginner class. Students in the Tiny Tots class will learn basic technique, Irish Dance vocabulary and play games related to foundations they will need for beginner class like pointed toes and balance! Dancers can move out of Tiny Tots into Beginner once they are older than 4, at the discretion of the TCRG's.

Beginner 1

This is a class for people just beginning Irish Dance and will occur once per week. Children may begin at age 4 and no former dance training is required. Dancers will learn the basics of Irish Dancing - jump 2,3's and sevens - along with the basic technique required for their later training. There will be an emphasis on the strong technical basics, musical timing, and proper posture. Dancers at this level may begin competing once they have learned the four basic soft shoe dances and can dance them properly. This will be at the discretion of the TCRG's.

Adult

Adult classes are conducted in a fun and easy-going atmosphere. They are designed to adjust to the different levels of ability, from beginner to advanced, based on the dancer's interest and learned experience. Beginner adults start off learning the basic soft shoe steps, technique, stretches and cardio. As an adult student progresses hard shoe and ceili dances will be introduced, should they wish, at the TCRG's discretion.

Beginner 2

This class will be danced at the same time as Beginner 1 but will occur two or three times weekly. No former training is required. Dancers in this class have 1) already been dancing for a year and have learned the four basic soft shoe dances or 2) have just started are eager to learn Irish Dance and want to attend class more times a week to quickly improve their skills. Dancers at this level may begin competing once they have learned the four basic soft shoe dances and can dance them properly. This will be at the discretion of the dance teachers. Dancers at this level may also be invited to participate in figure classes - group dancing- if the teacher sees fit. Dancers will remain in Beginner 2 for two or three years, depending on how often they attend Feiseanna, if they are ready to begin learning hard shoe, and have mastered the beginner material. This, again, will be at the discretion of the TCRG's.

Advanced Beginner

This is a class for dancers who have mastered the four basic soft shoe dances, have attended at least two Feiseanna (if they are competitive), and/or have moved up to the advanced beginner level in competition. These dancers will begin learning the three hard shoe dances and will continue focusing on the basic technique and musicality of Irish Dance. There will also be a large emphasis put on proper stage presence and etiquette. These dancers are also required to begin participating in figures - group dancing - classes and perform these dances at the competitions they attend. Figures solidify the basic technique the dancers have learned from Beginner 1 and 2 on and teach the dancers how to dance in a uniform, team setting. Competitive dancers are encouraged to attend as many Feiseanna within a dance year that they can to progress quickly through the grades and are expected to attend our own competition every September.

Novice - Prizewinner

This is a class for dancers who have mastered all of the basic soft and hard shoe dances, have a good concept of musical timing, and have their dances in Novice or Prizewinner in competition. This is where dancers will begin their preparation for Championships which includes more complicated material, and a serious focus on stage presence and stylistic dancing. Dancers at this level are also required to participate in the figure classes and compete in figure competition when they attend Feiseanna. Dancers in Novice and up can wear a solo costume for their solo dances at competitions. As with all purchases pertaining to dance, a new solo costume must be approved by the instructors. Competitive dancers are encouraged to attend as many Feiseanna within a dance year that they can to progress quickly through the grades and are expected to attend our own competition every September.

Championships

This is a class for dancers competing at the highest levels of Irish Dancing competition - Preliminary and Open Championships. These dancers will train very hard and focus on complicated steps, stage presence, and stylistic dancing to prepare them for national and international competitions. They will do workouts, both at home and in the studio that will improve their strength and stamina to execute their dances properly. Dancers in this class understand that their dedication and hard work will help them achieve their championship goals and that the dance teachers will push them so that they can achieve these goals. Championship dancers will also participate in figure classes and compete with their teams when they attend Feiseanna. Championship dancers are to have a solo costume that has been approved by the instructors prior to purchase, a team crown (made locally), certain types of Camilla Rose wig, and buckles. Please consult with the instructors about any of these purchase before they are made. Championship dancers are encouraged to attend as many Feiseanna within a dance year that they can to progress quickly into Open Championships and perfect their stage performance throughout the year. Championship dancers are expected to attend our own competition every September as well as any competition that directly precedes a major they plan to attend.

Workshops: We have the good fortune of working with Kate O'Connor from the world-class Butler-Fearon O'Connor School of Irish Dance. Founded in 2003 as a result of a merge between the world-famous Butler-Fearon School of Canada and California, and the O'Connor-Kennedy School in

California, it has quickly become the premier school in the Western US and in Eastern Canada, as well as internationally. Kate, or one of the other teachers in her school, come to us twice a year for workshops to teach new material and improve technique. These workshops typically take place in the fall and spring; dates are announced when available. The RCIDPA is responsible for funding the bi-annual workshops and will fundraise accordingly.

Private Lessons: Instructors can be contacted directly to arrange private lessons. The rate for these lessons is \$40 per hour with one of the TCRGs. This fee is due upon arrival at the private lesson. Payment will be accepted in the form of cash, cheque, or e-transfer.

Private Lesson Cancellation Policy: Private lessons must be cancelled 24 hours in advance. If you do not show up for the lesson or do not give the instructors sufficient notice, you will be required to pay the private lesson fee.

Drop-in classes: These are classes scheduled outside the regular practice schedule and are optional. Parents will be informed of upcoming drop-in classes via email. The current fee for drop-in classes is **\$5/dancer/class** and is payable to the instructors upon arrival. **Cash only please.**

Student Absence: Parents need to communicate their child's absence to the instructors via email or text prior to the start of class. If a student misses a prolonged period of dance they may not be permitted to participate to the fullest extent in dance outs and/or team competitions. This is at the discretion of the instructors. No refunds or discounts will be given to students who miss classes.

Performances: Unless otherwise advised, dancers should be in their performance costume for every dance-out. Performance outfit consists of **black bodysuit, school skirt, shorts, and white socks** for girls and **school golf shirt and black dress pants** for boys. The programs of the dance performances are at the discretion of the instructors. Performances will be scheduled throughout the year based on demand and information about each performance will be emailed out by the instructors.

At Home Practice: Students are encouraged to practice at home as often as possible. Even a few minutes each day can contribute to their progress. As parents are sometimes unclear of their role in assisting with at home practice, we simply ask that you help your child find the time and space to practice and leave the rest up to them. Please do not try to coach or teach your child as far as steps and technique are concerned, as this can un-train things the instructors have been working with your child and can confuse them.

Practice Music: Since timing is one of the core elements of Irish Dance, it is important that dancers have Irish Dance music at home to practice with. Refer to the *Members Only* page on our website for a selection of music the students can practice to or ask the instructors what to download.

Parent Viewing: River City classes are **closed door** as our younger dancers are easily distracted by onlookers. Therefore, we ask that parents drop off and help their dancer prepare for class and then vacate the studio spaces. This is with the exception of the Tiny Tots class where parents are invited to stay for the class.

Class Attire: Students in all class levels are required to come to class prepared to dance in proper attire consisting of:

- shorts/skirts (above the knee), a t-shirt or tank top. *Jeans/leggings not permitted.*
- White sport socks or bubble socks

- Hair pulled back off the face
- A proper sports bra and deodorant for older dancers
- Dance shoes as appropriate (**please label your shoes with your name). Shoe styles will be determined by the instructors.
- Running/training shoes (levels Advanced Beginner and up)

Costuming: All performance costumes, whether school or solo, need to be approved by the TCRG's. Costuming is at the discretion of the TCRGs only as the CLRG (Irish Dance Commission) has strict rules that we are expected to follow. Dancers in competition levels Novice and up are welcome to have a solo costume. Dancers in Championships are expected to have a current solo costume. See the Championship Guidelines below for more details on dressmakers and requirements.

Cleaning: Each family will be assigned a week to clean the studio throughout the year. This list is made in September and posted on the bulletin board at the studio. This information is also included in the weekly newsletter. You will have from Monday - Sunday of your assigned week to clean. Check the schedule for times that are available. A list of tasks is taped to the inside of the cleaning closet. Failure to clean the studio during your week will result in a **\$50 cleaning fee** being charged to your account. You may arrange to switch cleaning weeks with someone if you have scheduling conflicts, but please do so in advance and inform the instructors.

2019-2020 CLASS SCHEDULE

	SUNDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY FIGURES	SATURDAY SOLOS
Tiny Tots			5:15pm - 5:45pm			
Beginner		5:00pm - 5:45pm	5:45pm - 6:30pm	5:00pm - 5:45pm		
Advanced Beginner			6:30pm - 7:30pm	5:45pm - 6:45pm	10:00am - 11:30am	11:30am - 12:30pm (Extra)
Novice- Prizewinner			7:30pm - 8:45pm	6:45pm - 8:00pm	10:00am - 11:30am	11:30 am - 12:30pm
Championship		5:45pm - 8:15pm	7:30pm – 8:45pm (Extra)	8:00pm - 10:00pm	2:00pm - 3:00pm	12:00pm - 2:00pm
Adult	Beg. 1:00 - 2:00 Inter. 2:00 - 3:00 Adv. 3:30 - 4:30					

2019-2020 FEES

Level	Hours	Price/Month
Tiny Tots	30 min	\$55
Beginner 1	45 min	\$65
Beginner 2	90 min	\$80
Beginner 3	1 hour 35 min	\$95
Advanced Beginner	3 hours	\$155
Advanced Beginner Extra	1 hour	\$10
Novice/Prizewinner	5 hours	\$170
Championship	7 hour 30 min	\$225
Championship Extra	1 hour 15 min	\$10
Adult		\$50
Adult class pack		\$150/10 classes

**** Please take note that as of September 2019, GST will be applied to all dance fees/tuition. GST is a federal requirement for all corporations carrying out business in Canada and it will be remitted to the government yearly. This small amount will be applied to your dance fees monthly. For example, if your fees are \$65/month then you will pay (\$65 x 5% = \$2.75) \$67.75 each month. GST only applies to tuition, not Feis fees or other charges applied to your account.**

PAYMENT POLICIES

Fees for Irish Dance classes at River City are per dancer and correspond with the number of class hours attended per week. Please refer to earlier in this document for details on fees/class.

Withdrawal Policy

Notice of dancer resignation must be given in writing to the TCRG's and RCIDPA no less than one month before the 1st of the upcoming month. Non-attendance is not considered proper notice. If you do not give proper, written notice, your account will continue to be charged until formal notice has been received. After May 1st, NO refund on fees will be given for withdrawals and June fees will be deposited.

Refund Policy

Refunds will not be given for days missed due to absences, holidays, or weather-related closings. In the case of an extended leave of absence, payment will continue to be processed until the time that proper withdrawal notice has been given. See above.

Non-Payment Policy

Fees and charges are processed through the *Studio Director* on the **1st day of a given month, no exceptions.** Dancers with outstanding balances will not be allowed into class. This includes failure to provide payment by the 1st day of the new month. Dancers will not be permitted into the studio until payment has been made for that dancer.

Class Cancellation Policy

Dance classes cancelled by the school may or may not be made up. The schedule is set at the beginning of the year based on school holidays and Feiseanna. The monthly fees are averaged out over the entire dance season (10 months) rather than based on the number of classes per month. There will be no refund for missed classes.

Competition Fee Policy

Dancers who have been registered for a competition will be required to pay feis fees through the Studio Director prior to their attendance at the competition.

Personal Fundraising

Personal Fundraising opportunities are made available to families to subsidize dance fees throughout the year. We try to present one fundraising opportunity/month for families to choose to participate in. These will be published in the bi-weekly newsletter. Parents must volunteer throughout the year to organize the fundraisers and credits will be applied to your *Studio Director* account.

School Fundraising

The River City Irish Dance Parents Association is a non-profit organization run by River City parent volunteers. The RCIDPA's primary role is to support the dancers through fundraising for workshops and costumes. As well, they put on major fundraising events throughout the year such as the Christmas Concert and Ceili. The RCIDPA have a membership fee of **\$50/family** (billed through the Studio Director) that is to be paid annually at the beginning of every year. Costume fees are also paid to the RCIDPA. Please see the next document regarding costume guidelines for all the details. Payment to the RCIDPA can be taken in the form of **cash or cheque (made payable to RCIDPA).**

RCIDPA COSTUME GUIDELINES

A lot of time, planning and money have gone into acquiring our school dresses and vests so the following guidelines have been put together to protect RCIDPA's investment.

Rental Costs and Damage Deposits

- Costume rental is dependent on there being no outstanding monies owed to the RCIDPA
- Costumes must be returned at the end of the dance year for inspection, cleaning and inventory. Any costume deemed to be excessively worn (beyond normal wear and tear) or returned damaged will result in forfeiture of the damage deposit.
- Rental for the year is **\$50 a dress, \$10 a skirt and \$20 for vest and tie** (payable to RCIDPA)
- Damage deposit is **\$125 for dress and \$50 for vest and tie** dated **June 1, 2020** (payable to RCIDPA)
- Each vest, dress, kite and performance skirt is numbered because everyone's costumes look alike. This makes identifying the dancer's pieces easier.
- If you should lose or damage your costume or a part of it, you are responsible for the cost of replacement plus shipping.

Actual replacement costs are dependent on the size of the dress and the current selling price. Here are the approximate costs of replacement:

- ❖ Dress - \$1,000.00 CAD
- ❖ Crown - \$45.00 CAD
- ❖ Vest - \$100.00 CAD
- ❖ Performance Skirt - \$25.00 CAD

***All prices are approximate and subject to change due to the changing cost of the item.*

Costume Requirements

- Costume requirements are to be purchased and owned by the students and only need to be replaced when the student has grown
- All **female dancers** are **required** to purchase a bodysuit and shorts from the school for performance purposes. These may be purchase from the RCIDPA at a cost of **approx \$25-\$30 (bodysuit) and \$20 (shorts)**.
- Dancers are required to wear an undershirt with built in underarm guards to protect the dresses as they can't be cleaned. These shirts can be purchased from the RCIDPA for **approx \$20**.
- All **male dancers** are **required** to purchase a golf shirt for performance purposes. These may be purchased from the RCIDPA at a cost of **approx \$30**.
- All **Adult women** are **required** to wear **black tights** with their costumes as well. Please contact Adult Instructor, **Angella Mossop**, if you need a pair and she will let you know which tights you are to buy.

	Rental Cost	Damage Deposit	Requirements
Girls	\$50 – dress \$10 – skirt \$60 total rental	\$125 total deposit Post-dated cheque (payable to RCIDPA) <i>June 1</i>	\$30 – bodysuit \$20 – shorts \$20 – undershirt
Boys	\$20 total rental (vest + tie)	\$50 total deposit Post-dated cheque (payable to RCIDPA) <i>June 1</i>	\$30 – golf shirt

General Costume Care Instructions

- Dresses, skirts, and vest should be hung or laid flat. Do not hang in a closet if it is too narrow and the skirt bends at the sides.
- Please transport the dress in a bag that will keep it clean and not squish the skirt. Ideally an Irish dance dress bag, but if you don't have one a large plastic bag (the large, clear recycling bags) work well
- Before storing the dress away, air it out for a day.
- Do not eat or drink in the dress or wear the dress while riding in a vehicle.
- **Any dress, skirt or vest that is in need of repairs or alterations should be brought to the attention of Nicole Stevenson ASAP.**
- Alterations are only to be done by the RCIDPA.
- Contact Nicole Stevenson if you have any question or concerns about the care your costume.
- Costumes are not to be lent to anyone outside of our school for any reason.

Performance Skirt Care Instructions

- If washing is required, wash on a cold cycle using Woolite or similar gentle cleaner for dark fabrics.
- When ironing the embroidery, do not use steam or wet it. You can iron the embroidery on the reverse side with a cloth over it. There is a risk of damaging the thread with heat (thread is a rayon blend) or running the color of the thread.
- If you think it's not wearable after ironing it with the cloth over it, turn the iron to the rayon setting and iron it that way.
- The rest of the skirt can be ironed with normal heat/steam

Nicole Stevenson, RCIDPA Costume Coordinator
306-292-9442

nm.stevenson@hotmail.com

RCIDPA VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

In order to keep our dance school operational, it is essential that the RCIDPA organize and run fundraising opportunities and events throughout the dance year. It is the expectation that all families make the commitment to volunteer for the items listed below. This is **in addition** to the volunteers needed to run our annual feis (please see emails for feis volunteer needs). **Please note that unfilled jobs on this list, for the ceili and for the feis, will be assigned to families who have not yet signed up to help.**

1. Personal Fundraising Opportunities – 1/ month (to help offset fundraising fees and other expenses). The examples listed below are simply suggestions based on successful and popular fundraisers offered in past years.

September: Discount Coupon Books – Kari Weiman

October:

November:

December: eg. Poinsettias

January: eg. Babas Perogies

February: eg. Purdy's Chocolates

March: eg. Prairie Meats

April: eg. Hanging Baskets

2. Ceili Committee- Help to **organize** the annual Ceili held in the **Spring** (committee led by Dawn Doherty-Affleck) **Volunteer shifts for the event will be added closer to the event date.**

1. _____

4. _____

2. _____

5. _____

3. _____

6. _____

3. Recital Committee- Help to **organize** the annual Recital – **November 17, 2019** (committee led by Dawn Doherty-Affleck)

1. _____

3. _____

2. _____

There will be additional opportunities to help out throughout the year as more school fundraisers are planned. We will also need you to volunteer for at least one shift at the annual Ceili, our largest fundraiser of the year. Feel free to attend our monthly RCIDPA board meetings to share your ideas and concerns. Thank you for sharing your valuable time with the dance families at RCSID.

Kari Weiman, RCIDPA Volunteer Coordinator

weimankari@gmail.com

COMPETITION (FEISEANNA)

An Irish Dance competition is called a **Feis** (pronounced fesh) and is a Gaelic term referring to the festival of activities that traditionally take place there. In addition to dance, there are often art and music competitions.

The **Western Canadian Oireachtas** (pronounced oh-rock-tus) is the qualifying event for the World Irish Dance Championships (Oireachtas Rince Na Cruine) also known as the 'Worlds', and the North American Irish Dance Championships. This event takes place every November and is only open to dancers in the Championship levels. Although, there are often Treble Jig Trophy and Traditional Set competitions made available to students in Novice and Prizewinner.

Oireachtas Rince na Cruine (Worlds) is the premier event of the year in competitive Irish Dancing. It is a week-long event that is held over Easter. The Worlds are held in Canada, the United States, Scotland, England or Ireland, on a rotating basis. This is an elite event, only attended by a select handful of students from each region of Irish Dance from all over the world. It is an incredibly difficult event to qualify for and it is a huge accomplishment for dancers to have the opportunity to compete at.

North American Irish Dance Championships is another premier event that is held the first week of July each year. This event is held at various cities throughout Canada and the United States, again, on a rotating basis. Dancers must also qualify for this event at the Oireachtas or be in Open Championships.

In order to be entered into any of these competitions a dancer must practice under and be registered through a teacher certified through the Irish Dancing Commission (An Coimisiún le Rincí Gaelacha) and hold the TCRG credentials.

We have the privilege of hosting our own Feis every September. Our Feis is the only one held in Saskatchewan all year so it is a great opportunity for all our dancers to attend a Feis. **All dancers registered with River City will be registered** for the **River City Feis and Grade Exams** if they are planning to enroll in the new dance year. If you are unable to make it to this competition, please speak with the instructors well in advance.

Grade Exams are a series of 12 examination sessions created to improve dancers' knowledge and execution of Irish Dancing. As of 2018, dancers will be required to have completed all their grade exams in order to take their TCRG (Irish Dance teacher certification). Grade exams are held a couple times per year, often in conjunction with a feis.

FEIS ENTRIES: All dancers will be enrolled in feiseanna by the instructors and charged through the Studio Director. Please ensure you read the newsletter for Feis entry deadlines.

FEIS ETIQUETTE

It is the choice of a dancer and his/her family whether they wish to compete and is entirely optional. While our classes are designed to prepare dancers for competition, it remains up to them whether they wish to do so. However, those dancers who wish to progress through the grades quickly or attend the premier events such as North Americans and Worlds are encouraged to attend as many Feiseanna as they can throughout the year to improve their on-stage performance.

Please remember that all of our behavior at Feiseanna or shows (Parents, Teachers and Students) is a reflection on our school, especially when the dancers are wearing River City attire. At River City, we value sportsmanlike behavior: Please do not speak negatively of any dancers, parents, adjudicators, teachers or other schools. A good thing to remember is that you never know if someone's Mom or teacher is sitting right behind or in front of you. At the same time, please refrain from making negative comments about our own dancers or school when you are at the Feis. We are a small community and we are here to support one another. If you have a valid complaint, please bring it to the instructors so that it can be dealt with accordingly.

While it can certainly be tempting to tell your dancer to go and get first place as a pep talk, please resist. Try to ensure your dancer focuses on dancing the best they can and stays focused on having fun and completing a strong performance. Your dancer will perform better and will have a more positive experience.

Dancers at the Feis are expected to be **properly attired**. A sports bra and bloomers are not acceptable for a public event. Being properly dressed helps to represent River City in a professional manner.

Dancers and parents are **never to speak to or disturb the adjudicators at a Feis**. If you have a question at a Feis please direct it to either the side-stage volunteers or your instructors. Please remember that the side-stage volunteers are often parents of the dancers and may not have all the answers, but they are not to be addressed in any way that could be perceived as rude or abrasive. If the side-stage staff are unable to answer your question, please find your instructors.

FIRST FEIS TIPS

The world of Irish Dance can be rather overwhelming to new parents and dancers. Please consult with the instructors before you decide to sign up for a competition to ensure that your child knows the proper material. If your child's first Feis is coming up soon, see below for information on how the competitions run and what to do!

- **Syllabus:** This document is posted when the Feis is published online, usually to a site called Feisworx, but each competition can choose which site they use. The instructors will let you know which site to check out for each competition. It contains a tentative schedule, standard competition rules, and competition number listings.
- **Hotel Bookings:** The link for the hotel is posted at the same time as the syllabus. Rooms in the hotels, especially the majors, book up incredibly fast so it is important to book once the link is opened.
- **Program:** This document is posted to the same Feis site as the Syllabus once the entries have been closed and the Feis Committee has had a chance to rearrange the schedule, if necessary, because of entry numbers. It is often not posted until the day before. It contains the number your dancer has been assigned for their solo dancing and what competition numbers they have been entered in. Compare the competition numbers they have been entered in, to the schedule in the syllabus and you will be able to see when they will be competing. Please ask the instructors before the day of if you have any questions.
- **Registration Table:** Visit the registration table once you get to the competition to purchase programs (most are online PDFs now) and pick up competitor numbers (found in the program). **Please know you dancers' number ahead of time.** They often organize numbers by school. Also go to this table if there has been a mistake in your dancers' registration that needs to be altered.
- Dancers in First Feis can be entered in the following competitions:
 - First Feis Reel, First Feis Light Jig
 - First Feis ReelTrophy
 - Beginner Reel, Beginner Light Jig, Beginner Single Jig, Beginner Slip Jig (girls only)
 - Any 'Specials' – these are fun competitions for trophies and are different at every Feis.
- **Timing:** The Feis Schedule is often a difficult document to read, even for the most seasoned Feis veterans! Typically, only an 8 AM start time and LUNCH time are announced on the Schedule. The rest of the competition just runs without an exact time set. All dancers are expected to arrive down at the feis venue **at least half an hour** before their competition may begin. Most First Feis competitions are set for 8 AM or just after lunch to make it easier for First Feisers to make it to their competitions! Consult with the instructors if you are unsure about start times, but they also will be unsure sometimes as it is impossible to tell how each, individual schedule will run for the competitions. Being early is always a safe bet!

- **Costuming:** Dancers are to arrive in the ballroom with wig, crowns, socks, bloomers, and appropriate warm-up gear (i.e. sweats and a sweater). They can get into their costume and shoes when they are down there. Be sure to buy a number holder at one of the vendors at the Feis.
- **Competition Numbers:** The competition numbers will be posted on a board behind each stage (A,B,C,D,etc). The competitions will run in that order and the side-stage volunteers will remove numbers once that competition has been completed. When it is getting close to your dancers' competition, send them side-stage (parents are not allowed to sit side-stage with dancers) and they will be lined up and counted in by the volunteers. Be sure to pay attention to the announcers in the room as well as they will often announce which competitions need to come side-stage as well as important information about the event, such as awards.
- **Awards:** Each competition is different, but awards for **trophy competitions (i.e. First Feis Trophy, Specials)** will be announced onstage, either at lunch and at the end of the day, or at a time set by the individual competition. When awards are called, dancers must be ready in full costume and shoes and prepared to go onstage if their number is called to accept their trophy! **Medal competitions (i.e. Beginner Reel, Light Jig, etc.)** will be posted in numerical order in a hallway or awards room. You will look for your dancers' competition number and then see if they were given a medal placing. If they did place, go up to the table with medals on it and volunteers will give ask for the competition number and the placement. Then, your dancer will be given their medals!

CHAMPIONSHIP CLASS GUIDELINES

Championship class is designed for students who are competing at the highest level of competition in Irish Dance. These dancers are dedicated to their performance, both onstage and in the studio. These dancers will be expected to train with the utmost discipline and focus, while taking care of themselves both physically and mentally. Parents are to support their dancer and make sure that they have all the tools necessary to succeed as an elite competitive Irish Dancer. Please see below for some important guidelines for being in Championships!

- **Class Preparedness:** Dancers in the Championship levels must always be prepared for dance class as their class times are a lot longer than the other levels. This includes, **water, nutritious snacks, braces and medical tape, band-aids, running shoes**, along with the typical class requirements as were listed earlier in the handbook.
- **Class Times:** It is incredibly important that dancers arrive **early** for Championship class so that they have time to stretch and roll out their muscles before we do our warm-up and workout.
- **At Home Training:** Dancers competing at the Championship level are expected to practice at home and do any workouts or exercises that the instructors, physio, or trainers assign. When it comes to new material, dancers will be taught the dance once and are expected to work on it both in class and at home
- **Workouts:** Most Champ classes will start with a workout. This routine will be set by the instructors at the beginning of every class. Students are asked to bring the following items for the workout portion of class:
 - **Running/Training Shoes**
 - **Hand Roller** - They can be purchased at any sporting goods store or on-line.
https://www.amazon.ca/gp/product/B01NADHIT0/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_bia_widget_title_o00_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1
 - **Thera-Band** - They can be purchased at any sporting goods store or on-line. Below is a link for a set of 3 on Amazon for \$20.
https://www.amazon.ca/Thera-Band-Light-Exercise-Yellow-Green/dp/B000LX4KRA/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1531198444&sr=8-3&keywords=thera+band
- **Injuries:** Irish Dance is a high impact sport so some injuries such as ankle sprains, shin splints, plantar fasciitis etc. may affect your dancer at any point throughout the year. Please make sure that dancers are telling the instructors about any injuries *as soon as they occur* so that they can provide guidance on short-term treatment and advise if a Physio should be introduced to treat the injury. We work very closely with **Trevor Donald** of Donald Physiotherapy as he has an extensive knowledge of dance injuries and rehabilitation. If you do not already have a Physio and need to consult with one, we would suggest any one of the amazing staff in Trevor's practice. Dancers will be responsible for keeping up their Physio exercises and stretches once assigned.
- **Costumes:** Solo Costumes are a very important part of Irish Dance. At River City, we make sure that the dancers have an individual identity, while still looking like a member of our team using

team crowns and buckles. Championship dancers are to have a modern, instructor-approved costume at all times. Dancers should aim to get a new costume every 1-2 years to ensure that they can re-sell their old costume to help fund the new one. It is *far* easier to sell a modern costume back into the market and there is less risk of you losing money if you turn over costumes quickly.

- Please Note: *If attending a major competition such as The World Championships or North American Championships, the dancer **will not be registered** unless they have an instructor approved costume either in their possession or in the works for the major.*
 - **Buying New:** With the popularity of Irish Dance continuing to grow, many of the dressmakers are being booked from **6 months to 1 year ahead of time**. If you plan to have a costume made, it is important to plan ahead of time and consult with the instructors in regards to which dressmaker to go with, colours, and design elements.
 - **Buying Used:** There are many lovely used costumes available through Facebook sharing pages or at competitions. As with new, please consult with the instructors before buying a used costume.
 - **Measurements:** Make sure that you have accurate measurements to go off whether you are buying new or used. You can have your dancer measured by the instructors out of class time or we have measurement sheets that tell you exactly what needs to be measured for costume purposes.
 - **Crowns:** Champ girls will all have the same solo crown in a colour to match their solo dress, to be finalized by the instructors. This crown is made locally by Lola Piche and is approximately \$70 CAN. This crown will be worn during all solo competitions.
 - **Buckles:** Champ girls are to wear buckles on their hard shoes when competing in solo competition. Blank buckles can be purchased from The Kilt Lady and parents/dancers can gem the buckles themselves. There should be two rows of size 34 AB crystals on the outside, and 4-5 size 34 coloured gems in the middle (depending on the dancers' solo costume colour).
 - **White Laces/White Tape:** Champ girls are to have white laces in their soft shoes and white electrical tape for the hard shoes at competition. The laces can be purchased at The Kilt Lady and electrical tape is available at the studio for \$2/roll or you can purchase it at any hardware store. The instructors will show the dancers how to tape their feet
 - **Makeup:** Dancers **11 and up** can wear makeup. Please talk to the instructors about which makeup to buy and how to apply it.
 - **Tanning:** There is no age restriction on tanning, so all girls are allowed to have tanned legs at competition. You can either book a tan at the feis or use at-home tanner yourself.
 - **Wigs:** Champ girls are to wear long wigs only – no bun wigs. The Kilt Lady is a vendor for Camilla Rose Wigs and dancers can choose either the **Anna Long** or **Robyn** style for solo competition. Please note that dancers are expected to have an Anna Long, or a similar long tight-curved wig for performances and team competitions. Please consult with the instructors about colour before you buy a wig.
 - **Shoes:** Dancers should buy these specific brands, again from the Kilt Lady, because they are the shoes that the instructors have tested and are confident with their quality and performance
 - **Soft Shoes:** Hullachan
 - **Hard Shoes:** Fays

- **Feiseanna:** As Championship dancers are competing at an elite level, it is important that they attend a number of competitions throughout the year. This becomes essential before major competitions such as the **Oireachtas, Worlds, and North Americans**. Students attending these prestigious events are required to attend a competition that directly precedes these. For example, students qualified for the Oireachtas are to attend the October (Casey O'Loughlin) Feis.

For your Physio needs contact:

Donald Physiotherapy

Call: **306-933-3372**

Address: **80-3211 Preston Ave.,
Saskatoon SK**

For your Costuming needs contact:

The Kilt Lady – **Dawn McNally**

Call/Text: **306-260-1286**

Address: **1615 Forest Drive,
Saskatoon SK**